# What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week — Patricia Treib

The New York Times | Roberta Smith | June 1, 2017

In “Interstices,” a strong show at Bureau on the Lower East Side, Patricia Treib’s festive abstract paintings combine pictorial sophistication with an unexpectedly gratifying irresolution, almost an unease. Ms. Treib’s colors swing between saturated and pale, avoiding straightforward primaries. Her shapes intersect at awkward angles but often stop short of touching, exposing slivers and interstices of bare canvas that create a jangly autonomy of parts. And these shapes are anything but simply rectilinear — they combine straight with curved in eccentric ways that repeat from canvas to canvas, emphasizing the deliberation of their contours.

In “Enfold” and “Skirt,” the dominant teal shapes suggest a profile of a breast atop a complex anvil-like pedestal. Other shapes have little stretches of jagged and scalloped edges that meet in comedic outbursts, as in “Gathers,” “Blue Proximity” and “Asturian,” whose title shares its name with a West Iberian Romance language formerly known as Bable.



Patricia Treib, *Skirt*, 2017.
Courtesy the artist and Bureau, New York.

Equally distinctive is a process that allows no margin for error: Painted in thinned-down oil redolent of stain painting, the shapes build up in calligraphic brush strokes that can’t be reworked. Smaller incidents of brushwork are overtly like calligraphy.

The inspirations for Ms. Treib's vocabulary range through East and West — particularly decorative flourishes that might be seen on textiles, ceramics or furniture — and include shapes that evoke accent marks, thought balloons or clothing patterns. Several shapes nestling in the upper corners of canvases suggest the simplified hair of the hapless dad in a comic book. Each painting loquaciously samples motifs and mark-making from different periods.

Yet Ms. Treib's efforts are also invigoratingly of the moment. They look as if they could only have been made today.